



## Call for proposals: Grants for actions to support training in conference interpreting – academic year 2023-2024

*Please note that these grants concern universities and interpreting schools only. Information about bursaries to individual students can be found on [this website](#).*

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## 1. Introduction

The Directorate General for Interpretation of the European Commission (SCIC) provides grants to co-fund actions which support conference interpreter training. [11 actions for the academic year 2021-2022](#) and [7 actions for the academic year 2022-2023](#) were co-funded in the respective years.

The [work programme for 2023 on financial support for training in conference interpreting](#) provides detailed information on financial support and budget availability for conference interpreter training. This is the legal basis for the financial assistance granted by the European Commission to universities training interpreting students.

Applications must be submitted electronically via SPIRIT. More information on how to prepare the application is available under Point 13 of the present document.

## 2. Objectives of the programme

The programme aims to promote the development of training resources and to continue support for centres of excellence that meet the demanding professional standards for conference interpreting. It contributes to the training of quality conference interpreters who may subsequently be recruited by the Union institutions as officials or accredited conference interpreters (free-lancers) with the required working languages. This ensures the proper functioning of the European Union's Institutions.

## 3. Indicative timetable

Publication of the call:	21 March 2023
Deadline for submitting applications:	<b>11 May 2023 17:00 CET (Brussels time)</b>
Evaluation period	May - June 2023
Award decision:	June 2023
Signature of grant agreements:	July - September 2023
Starting date of the action:	not before submission of the application
Ending date of the action:	no later than 31 July 2024 except for duly justified reasons

## 4. Budget availability

The total budget earmarked for the co-funding of projects under this call for proposals is estimated at **EUR 380 000**. DG Interpretation reserves the right not to award all the funds available.

Based on the results of previous years, the expectation is that around 9 interpreting courses (action Type A) and 2 other projects (action Type B) will be financed, subject to budget availability.

If the total amount of grants requested and considered acceptable for award by DG Interpretation exceeds the budget earmarked in the work programme for 2023 on financial support for training in conference interpreting, only the best-ranked applications will receive funding, while the lower ranked applications may be placed on a reserve list.

The grants awarded for Type B proposals (other actions) may not exceed 40% of the total grant amount, except where the awarded grant amount for Type A proposals (actions linked to the organisation of a conference interpreting course) does not reach 60% of the total earmarked budget.

## 5. Admissibility requirements

In order to be admissible for co-funding by DG Interpretation of the European Commission applications must:

- be drafted in one of the EU official languages
- include all Sections I–V of the grant application, as well as all required annexes, filled in correctly
- be sent no later than the deadline for submitting applications referred to in Point 13;
- be submitted electronically via the [SPIRIT Grants web application](#) (applications sent by email or fax will **not** be accepted);

### **Failure to comply with these requirements will lead to rejection of the application.**

Please complete the relevant section of the grant application form for the type of action applied for (cf. Point 6.2. Eligible actions).

A privacy statement applies to personal information transmitted with the application form. By submitting an application, the entities consent to the processing of personal data (cf. Section IV of grant application form).

## 6. Eligibility criteria

### 6.1 Eligible applicants

The following types of institutions may submit proposals:

- universities, university institutes, consortia and associations of universities or institutes, legally established in one of the Member States of the European Union, in one of the EFTA countries or in a [candidate country](#)<sup>1</sup> and which offer or coordinate postgraduate courses specialising in conference interpreting;
- associations, consortia and bodies, legally established in one of the Member States of the European Union, in one of the EFTA countries or in a candidate country, whose main mission is to develop and/or support cooperation and disseminate best practices in the field of conference interpreter training;
- where necessary, consortia may include private sector actors who have the specific expertise needed to implement the proposed actions.

DG Interpretation supports actions involving a single applicant (mono-beneficiary) and/or actions involving several institutions presented by one coordinator (multi-beneficiary).

Where a university consortium has non-EU based members, the total support to such non-EU based members cannot exceed 10% of the maximum EU financial contribution awarded for the corresponding grant. For the purpose of the scheme, candidate countries and EFTA countries are considered Member States.

Teaching establishments must be approved by their national authorities as public or private bodies entrusted with a public task of teaching and organising courses at master or postgraduate level in the field of conference interpreting or other fields, related to the objectives of this programme. Applicants must ensure that none of the involved entities are subject to EU restrictive measures adopted under

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<sup>1</sup> Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Türkiye and Ukraine (Status March 2023)

Article 29 of the Treaty on the European Union (TEU) or Article 215 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU)<sup>2</sup>. The prohibition applies throughout the whole performance of the agreement.

## 6.2. Eligible actions

The following actions are eligible for a grant under the current call for proposals:

a) actions related to the organisation of specialised master or postgraduate courses in conference interpreting (Type A):

- promoting quality and linguistic diversity in the teaching of interpreting in the official languages of the EU and of the candidate countries

b) other actions aimed at supporting the following activities (Type B):

- establishing and supporting postgraduate centres of excellence in conference interpreting;
- fostering cooperation among postgraduate courses in different Member States of the European Union, EFTA countries and [candidate countries](#); a limited number of postgraduate courses from third countries offering languages of particular interest for the EU may also be included;
- developing innovative pilot projects including those which create synergies with other types of interpreter training and which foster the interpreting profession as a whole.

## 7. Exclusion criteria

Beneficiaries must not fall within the categories excluded under [Article 136 of the Financial Regulation](#) (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council (Official Journal of the European Union L193 – 18 July 2018)

By signing Section IV - Declaration on honour of the application form, applicants certify that none of the situations mentioned in Article 136 of the Financial Regulation apply and state that they are not subject to any conflict of interest. For an action implemented by several institutions, the coordinating institution may sign the declaration on honour on behalf of the other partners.

## 8. Selection criteria

If the application is submitted on behalf of a group of partners, the financial and operational capacity of the group shall be assessed taking into consideration the effective contribution of each partner to the performance of the action.

### 8.1. Financial capacity

Applicants must have stable and adequate funding resources to maintain their action during the period of implementation of the action. The financial capacity of associations and consortia must be commensurate with the scale, duration and planned execution of the proposed action.

For public bodies of Member States, candidate countries and EFTA countries grant requests of a maximum of EUR 60 000, the signed declaration on honour suffices (cf. Section IV of grant application form).

For grant requests exceeding EUR 60 000, the applicants must include a balance sheet for the last closed financial year and demonstrate that their minimum yearly turnover is at least twice the amount of the total costs of the proposed action. If the required ratio is not met, DG Interpretation may deem the financial capacity insufficient or, where possible, take additional measures with a view to protecting EU interests, such as dividing the grant payment into more instalments.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that the EU Official Journal contains the official list of entities subject to restrictive measures and, in case of conflict, it prevails over the list of the [EU Sanctions Map](#).

## 8.2. Operational capacity

Applicants must have the professional skills and qualifications required to provide specialised training at the required professional level. They must have:

- appropriate human resources, including qualified professional trainers and proven project management capacities
- key staff assigned to the implementation of the action who have a proven record of relevant training experience in the field
- the technical and logistical infrastructure necessary to perform the proposed action.
- the ability to manage the proposed action. Associations or consortia must demonstrate this ability by describing the roles and responsibilities of the various partners involved in the organisation of the action.

The operational capacity will be evaluated on the basis of the information provided in the application form under Section II.A.3.1 a) and b) for postgraduate courses or Section II.B.3.8 for other actions, and **Annex 6** (Curricula Vitae). Please note that it is recommended to submit CVs in the [Europass](#) format.

## 9. Award criteria

The proposals will be assessed exclusively against the award criteria on the basis of the information contained in the submitted applications and any additional information which may be requested (cf. Point 12).

Maximum total points: 100 points<sup>3</sup>

Proposals which do not obtain a minimum of 60 points (=60%) of the maximum total of 100 points shall be excluded from award.

For actions Type A described in point 6.2 a) the grant award criteria are the following:

1. relevance to [language priorities and long-term needs of DG Interpretation](#) and in line with the [accreditation profile to become accredited freelance interpreters](#). This applies to the official Union languages and languages of the candidate countries; *max 40 points*;
2. efficiency and consistency of the training methodology and of the organisation proposed for the implementation of specialised masters or postgraduate conference interpreter training (measured against recognised [best practices for conference interpreting courses](#)) and use of new technologies, new forms of blended and/or online teaching; *max 30 points*;
3. co-operation with other universities and/or EU or international organisations for actions in the field of conference interpreting training; *max 15 points*;
4. cost-effectiveness of the action; *max 15 points*<sup>3</sup>.

For actions Type B described in Point 6.2 b) the grant award criteria are the following:

1. relevance of the proposed action to the general objectives of the grant programme (cf. Point 2); *max 30 points*;
2. demonstrated multiplier effect, medium and long-term impact of the action's outcome and/or dissemination of best practices of the action, for the benefit of the training of future conference interpreters in order to increase their employability and multidisciplinary skills; *max 20 points*;
3. co-operation between universities and other stakeholders, and/or with EU or international organisations for actions in the field of conference interpreting training; *max 20 points*;
4. innovative character of the action; *max 20 points*;

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<sup>3</sup> Taking into consideration the average costs per students compared with the ratio of inter-institutional accreditation test results over the years 2017 to 2022.

If the 4<sup>th</sup> criterion is not applicable (as no course or no tests took place), the action will be subject to a weighted maximum of 85 points (instead of 100 points) with 51 points (instead of 60 points) as the required minimum.

5. cost-effectiveness and/or synergies of the action by creating synergies with other types of interpreting training and fostering the interpreting profession as a whole (The proposal must show a reasonable and realistic budget and a sound cost-efficiency ratio.); max 10 points.

## 10. General principles and specific rules

### a) General principles:

- An action may only receive **one grant** from the EU budget (non-cumulative award).
- A grant is a form of **complementary funding** to promote the European Union's objectives based on the principle of co-funding and may not finance the total cost of the action.
- **Income** and **expenditure** of the proposed budget must be **detailed** and **in balance**. If the total amount paid as pre-financing by DG Interpretation exceeds the final eligible amount of the grant determined at the end of the action, any amounts overpaid have to be reimbursed by the beneficiary.
- Only **costs directly related to and necessary** for the action may be co-funded.
- **No grant** may be awarded **retroactively** for actions already started or completed. However, should a grant be awarded, certain costs incurred by the beneficiary before the signature of the grant agreement might be accepted as eligible for co-funding (e.g. aptitude tests, preparation of the course), provided that the applicant has demonstrated the need to start the action before the award of the grant and that they are included in the budget and accepted as eligible in the grant agreement. Costs incurred **prior to the submission date** of the application are **never** eligible for co-funding.

### b) Specific rules:

- Under this programme the co-funding of the actions may not exceed 75% of the total eligible costs.
- Where a university consortium has non-EU based members, the total support to such non-Union based universities cannot exceed 10% of the maximum EU financial contribution awarded for the corresponding grant. For the purpose of the scheme, candidate countries and EFTA countries are considered Member States.
- The full cost of purchase of equipment may be deemed eligible, i.e. a depreciation rate of 100%.

## 11. Data protection and early detection and exclusion system (EDES)

If processing a reply to the invitation to this call for proposals involves the recording and processing of personal data (such as name, address and CV), such data will be processed pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) N° 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC. Unless indicated otherwise, any personal data will be processed solely for evaluation purposes under the call for proposals by Unit C.2, DG SCIC and Unit B.1, DG SCIC. Details concerning the processing of your personal data are available in the privacy statement at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/data-protection-public-procurement-procedures_en). For any additional information, please contact: [scic-grants-to-universities@ec.europa.eu](mailto:scic-grants-to-universities@ec.europa.eu), stating clearly the name and reference of the procedure.

Personal data may be registered in the Early Detection and Exclusion System by the Commission should the beneficiary be in one of the situations mentioned in Articles 136 and 141 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046.

## 12. Contacts between applicants and DG Interpretation

- Before the deadline for the submission of applications, you can address questions regarding the grant application exclusively by e-mail to: [SCIC-grants-to-universities@ec.europa.eu](mailto:SCIC-grants-to-universities@ec.europa.eu)  
All questions and answers for this selection round will be published on this website on a regular basis under section “[Frequently Asked Questions](#)”. We suggest that you also check this page regularly for any updates (**latest update: by 8 May 2023**).
- In accordance with Article 200.3 of the Financial Regulation, during the evaluation stage the applicant may be asked to provide additional information, or to clarify supporting documents via email. The applicant needs to reply within the deadline set in the request for clarification.
- Please refer to the [Applicant's Guide](#) for more information on what happens once the grant application is dispatched.

## 13. Electronic submission of the grant application via SPIRIT

### **Important:**

Please consult the **Applicant's Guide**, which gives additional important information on how to complete the grant application, in particular concerning the budget (eligible/non-eligible costs, explanations on the budget categories), partners and rules on VAT (Value Added Tax).

Applicants are requested to log on via their EU login to the [SPIRIT Grants web application](#), follow the instructions given in the [SPIRIT Grants External Users' Manual](#) and submit the grant application:

[Section I \(Identification\)](#),

[Section II A \(Type A Action description\)](#) and/or [Section II B \(Type B Action description\)](#)

[Section III \(Budget Overview\)](#)

[Section IV \(Declaration of honour\)](#)

[Section V \(Overview of links to documents and Check list\)](#)

- no later than **11 May 2023 (17:00 CET, Brussels time)** via SPIRIT
- filled in and complete (please do not combine several documents in one document)
- in **PDF format** (except the [Annex 8 Budget details](#) and [Annex 7 Course plan](#) which must be submitted in MS Excel format)  
not exceeding **50 MB per file**  
Should the size of a file exceed 50 MB please separate the document into several parts indicating *Part 1, Part 2...* in the file's name.
- neither referring to an external drive nor sent in a compressed format (.zip)

No modification to the application is allowed once the deadline for submission has elapsed. However, if there is a need to clarify certain aspects or to correct clerical mistakes, DG Interpretation may contact the applicant during the evaluation process.

**Applications sent by email or fax will not be accepted.**

**Applicants are advised to submit their applications in time, to avoid last minute technical issues.**

## 14. Information on the award decision

The applicants will be informed as soon as possible of the outcome of the selection procedure solely by electronic means using the email address indicated in the application.

For actions described in point 6.2 a), some small adjustments to the budget may be necessary once the final list of students and their language combinations is known. In such cases, the applicants are requested to inform DG Interpretation immediately, in writing, of the changes to the budget and the grant amount requested.

However, the initial amount requested cannot under any circumstances be increased, nor may the nature of the action and the type of budget items modified.

For the legal references, please consult the template of the [mono/multi-beneficiary grant agreement](#).

Please refer to the [Applicant's Guide](#) for more information on what happens if the grant application is successful and a grant is awarded: grant agreement, amendments, payments, reporting, calculation of the final grant, recovery, visibility of the Union's funding, controls, checks and audits.

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